

Message Text

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ACTION SY-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCCT-01 A-01 OPR-02 SCS-03 SCA-01

FBO-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ABF-01 /048 W

----- 022974

R 181530Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6566

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 9282

FOR DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY EAGLEBURGER FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC

SUBJECT: SECURITY PROTECTION AFFORDED PUBLIC ACCESS AREAS AT
OVERSEAS POSTS

REF A. STATE 210312; B. STATE 211364

1. I APPRECIATE YOUR INTEREST IN CAIRO'S AND ALEXANDRIA'S PHYSICAL SECURITY. I HAVE MADE MY INTEREST IN THIS KNOWN HERE FROM THE BEGINNING AND CONTINUE TO DO SO. IN CONNECTION WITH YOUR QUERY, YOU WILL APPRECIATE THAT UNLIKE MOST OTHER POSTS TOWHICH YOUR MESSAGE WAS SENT, WE HAVE BEEN IN BUSINESS AS AN EMBASSY FOR ONLY ABOUT A YEAR AND A HALF. IT HAS NECESSARILY BEEN A PERIOD OF RAPID, OFTEN PAINFUL EXPANSION OF STAFF, INVOLVING LOCATION AND RELOCATION OF OFFICES. WE HAVE STARTED VIRTUALLY FROM SCRATCH IN ORGANIZING AN EMBASSY OPERATION CAPABLE OF COOPERATING WITH THE HEAVY, RAPID ACTION REQUIREMENTS WITH WHICH THE POST HAS BEEN TASKED. ADEQUATE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS HAS BEEN ONE IMPORTANT FACTOR THAT HAS RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION.

2. ACCOMPLISHMENTS: IN APRIL 1974 A MARINE SECURITY GUARD DETACHMENT OF ONE NCOIC AND FIVE WATCHSTANDERS WAS ASSIGNED. IN AUGUST 1974 THE DETACHMENT WAS INCREASED TO TEN WATCHSTANDERS. AN RSO WAS ASSIGNED IN MAY 1974 TO COVER CAIRO AND ALEXANDRIA. HE HAS MADE A NUMBER OF SECURITY RECOMMENDA-

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TIONS. THE FOLLOWING HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED:

A. AT MAIN PEDESTRIAN ENTRANCE TO EMBASSY COMPOUND AND USIS LIBRARY, FSL WATCHMEN HAVE BEEN POSITIONED TO CONTROL ACCESS AND INSPECT HANDCARRIED PARCELS AND BRIEFCASES.

B. THREE COSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION CAMERAS HAVE BEEN INSTALLED ON THE EMBASSY COMPOUND BY TECHNICAL SECURITY OFFICERS FROM BEIRUT. THEY ARE MONITORED BY 24 HOUR MARINE GUARD POSTED IN CHANCERY.

C. PANIC ALARMS TO MSG POSTED IN THE CHANCERY HAVE BEEN POSITIONED IN EACH EMBASSY OFFICE AND AT USIS LIBRARY. MSG'S HAVE INSTRUCTIONS WHICH GUIDE THEIR RESPONSE TO ALARMS.

D. ADDITIONAL PROTECTIVE APPAREL, WEAPONS, AMMUNITION AND TEARGAS HAVE BEEN DELIVERED TO EMBASSY FOR USE BY MARINE GUARDS AND DESIGNATED EMBASSY PERSONNEL FOR EMERGENCY REACTION.

E. PERMIMETER WALL AROUND EMBASSY COMPOUND IS BEING HEIGHTENED AND REINFORCED.

F. PERMITER WALL AROUND USIS LIBRARY HAS BEEN HEIGHTENED AND REINFORCED.

G. EMBASSY HAS CONTRACTED FOR SIX MORE LOCAL WATCHMEN TO INCREASE ACCESS CONTROLS INTO EMBASSY COMPOUND.

H. AMBASSADOR HAS GOE POLICEMEN ACCOMPANYING HIM ON EACH VEHICULAR MOVEMENT AND POSTED AT HIS RESIDENCE 24 HOURS A DAY.

I. A 24 HOUR MARINE GUARD POST HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED AT AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE.

J. AMBASSADOR PRESENTLY RIDES IN A FULLY ARMORED LIMOUSINE ISSUED BY A/SY. WE HAVE HAD SOME PROBLEMS WITH THAT CAR, BUT HAVE EXERTED ALL EFFORTS, WITH SY'S HELP TO KEEP IT OPERABLE. A/SY HAS ALSO PROVIDED A FOLLOW CAR FOR HIS PROTECTIVE DETAIL.

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K. RSO HAS ESTABLISHED CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OFFICIALS WHICH HAVE RESULTED IN PROMPT ATTENTION TO THE SECURITY NEEDS OF THE MISSION.

L. RSO HAS DRAFTED CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR EMBASSY PERSONNEL FOR RIOTS, DEMONSTRATIONS, TERRORIST ATTACKS, KIDNAPPINGS AND BOMB THREATS.

M. EMBASSY HAS BENEFITED FROM SECURITY ORIENTED FILM ON BOMBS

AND NUMEROUS OTHER SECURITY FILMS AND BRIEFINGS.

N. RSO IS IN PROCESS OF CONDUCTING SECURITY SURVEYS
ON RESIDENCES OCCUPIED BY EACH EMBASSY OFFICER.

O. SPECIAL SECURITY WINDOWS HAVE BEEN INSTALLED
IN AMBASSADOR'S OFFICE.

3. I CONTINUE TO BE CONCERNED, NEVERTHELESS, ABOUT OUR PUBLIC ACCESS AREAS. GIVEN THE CONFIGURATION OF THE CAIRO COMPOUND, WE ARE VERY VULNERABLE. IN RECOGNITION OF THIS, I GAVE INSTRUCTIONS SOME NINE MONTHS AGO THAT PLANS BE DRAWN UP AND IMPLEMENTED FOR A NEW, MORE CONTROLLABLE PUBLIC ENTRANCE. SINCE THIS WILL INVOLVE SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURAL CHANGES IN THE CONFIGURATION OF AT LEAST PART OF THE EMBASSY PERIMETER WALL, WE HAVE HAD TO GO THROUGH THE PRESCRIBED FBO PROCEDURE OF SOLICITING OFFERS FOR DESIGN WORK. WE SUBMITTED THE ONLY TWO OFFERS RECEIVED TO FBO UNDER COVER OF A TRANSMITTAL SLIP DATED AUGUST 11, 1975. IN CAIRO 8828, I URGED THAT AN EXPEDITIOUS RESPONSE BE SENT SO THAT WE CAN GET THIS ALL IMPORTANT PROJECT UNDER WAY. T HAS DRAGGED ALONG TOO LONG ALREADY, PARTLY I REGRET TO SAY BECAUSE OF THE SLOWNESS OF MY OWN OVER-BURDENED ADMINISTRATION SECTION. NOW, HOWEVER, THE BALL IS IN THE FBO COURT AND ANYTHING YOU CAN DO TO URGE AN EXPEDITIOUS RESPONSE WILL BE HELPFUL.

4. ANOTHER OF MY MAJOR CONCERNS IS THE USIS CENTER, A SEPARATE BUILDING SEVERAL BLOCKS FROM THE EMBASSY COMPOUND. ALTHOUGH RSO HAS TAKEN OVER CONTROL OF EGYPTIAN GUARDS THERE, THE LIBRARY IS STILL VULNERABLE.

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OUR EGYPTIAN POLICE CONTACTS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN ON THIS VULNERABILITY, BUT HAVE NO GOOD IDEAS ABOUT HOW IT CAN BE REDUCED. USIS LIBRARY STAFF HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO BE VIGILANT IN SCRUTINIZING ANY VISITORS. RSO IS CURRENTLY SEEKING TO DEVISE OTHER MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN THE SECURITY OF THAT BUILDING.

5. VARIOUS OTHER SECURITY MEASURES ARE NOW IN THE PROCESS OF BEING IMPLEMENTED:

A. RSO HAS RECEIVED POST APPROVAL TO INSTALL A REMOTELY CONTROLLED TEARGAS SYSTEM FOR CHANCERY FOYER. WE ARE AWAITING SHIPMENT AND INSTALLATION BY SEABEES.

B. ONCE THE EMBASSY RECREATION AREA CONSTRUCTION IS COMPLETED, THE REGIONAL TECHNICAL CENTER IN BEIRUT WILL INSTALL ALARMS ON THE COMPOUND PERIMETER.

6. IN THE CASE OF ALEXANDRIA, THE OLD CONSULATE GENERAL BUILDING IS STILL UNDER RECONSTRUCTION BY SEABEES. WORK IS SOME FIVE MONTHS LATE, THANKS TO INADEQUATE SUPERVISION BY THE AMERICAN ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEER, BUT WE ARE NOW PROMISED COMPLETION BY EARLY NOVEMBER. RSO HAS CONSULTED REGULARLY WITH CONGEN TO OPTIMIZE SECURITY ASPECTS OF THE REHABILITATION WORK. ONCE THE BUILDING IS COMPLETED AND USABLE, WE WILL MAKE FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SECURITY OF PUBLIC ACCESS AREAS.

7. ALL OF THE ABOVE HELPED GREATLY BUT I AM UNDER NO ILLUSIONS THAT EITHER CAIRO OR ALEXANDRIA IS INVULNERABLE. OUR LOCATIONS ARE SUCH THAT THERE IS A LIMIT TO OUR ABILITY TO CONTROL UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY TO THE PREMISES AND COMPOUND. HOWEVER, POST PERSONNEL HAVE ALL BEEN BRIEFED AND ALERTED TO THE NEED FOR CONSTANT VIGILANCE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CAIRO09282
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750324-0934
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750937/aaaabgei.tel
Line Count: 187
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SY
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 210312, 75 STATE 211364
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 JUL 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <08 DEC 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SECURITY PROTECTION AFFORDED PUBLIC ACCESS AREAS AT OVERSEAS POSTS
TAGS: ASEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006